CIMLE *Current Issues in Middle Level Education* (2014) 19 (1), 20-35

The Symposium Project: Implementing a Shared Middle Level Teacher Education Program Library

Ellis Hurd
Illinois State University

Teaching institutions with middle grades-specific teacher preparation programs remain a cornerstone for improving the condition of the nation's middle schools. Yet such programs scarcely exist as the heartbeat of excellence for middle grades schools or for preservice teachers seeking middle grades licensure (Jackson & Davis, 2000). Moreover, educators within such programs which do exist may seldom engage in the very work they encourage, even thrust upon preservice teachers. This article describes the Symposium Project, how the author engaged a community of middle level professionals in order to develop a larger network for collaborations on middle level teacher education course redesigns. The result was the realignment of courses within the university's Middle Level Teacher Education (ML) Program and the adoption of a shared, middle-grades specific library. Gains were seen in students' performance and in the understanding of middle level philosophy, concepts, and structures. Overall, the Symposium Project resulted in a model of enhanced teaching and learning within the ML program from which others may benefit.

While current teacher preparation program issues are of concern to urban schools serving elementary and secondary education students, they are critically important to schools serving middle level students (Brown, 2002). It is during the middle level years (ages 11-14 years) that students choose to continue with their education through high school, or feel pushed towards dropping out at the first available opportunity (Clark & Clark, 1993). The middle level years are "a time when young people experience puberty, when growth and development is more rapid than during any other developmental stage except that of infancy" (Jackson & Davis, 2000, p. 6-7). In addition to physical and sexual change and growth, young adolescents experience dramatic intellectual, emotional, social, personal, and moral development (Jackson & Davis, 2000; Stevenson, 2002; Strahan, L'Esperance, & Van Hoose, 2009; Tanner, 1971).

Given the unique developmental characteristics of young adolescents, the specialized preparation of middle level teachers has long been seen as a critical component in successfully educating young adolescents (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989; Jackson & Davis, 2000; National Middle School Association, 1991, 2010). The literature in middle level education has included calls for such preparation for more than 80 years (Alexander & McEwin, 1984, 1989; Floyd, 1932; Koos, 1927, McEwin, Dickinson, Erb, & Scales, 1995). For several decades, many institutions of higher education, including this university, have offered middle level education majors and endorsements. Several states have gone a step farther and have created middle level certifications and licensure specifically to address the unique issues related to middle schools and young adolescents (Gaskill, 2002).

The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1989) finds that youth experience perhaps the most capricious time in growth and change during adolescence on those aforementioned levels. That instability must be met by exemplary middle grades schools. "Middle grade schools—junior high, intermediate, or middle schools—are potentially society's most powerful force to recapture millions of youth adrift" (Jackson & Davis, 2000, p. 2). Yet the As reported in Jackson and Davis (2000), the Carnegie Council (1989) argues that "all too often [middle grades schools] exacerbate the problems that youth face. A volatile mismatch exists between the organization and curriculum of middle grades schools, and the intellectual, emotional, and interpersonal needs of young adolescents" (Jackson & Davis, 2000, p. 2). This mismatch can be seen in how many schools organize themselves and curricula in contrast to the actual needs and interests of learners. Current standards-based reform efforts are representative of such impulsive educational shifts, with strong roots in traditional and behaviorist approaches which actually narrow curriculum and cause more discrepancy.

In order to improve the condition of the nation's middle schools, paradigm shifts within curricula, instruction, organization, and philosophy need to occur. Institutions of higher education with middle level teacher education programs must lead and reconstruct their courses and practicums and overall programs toward more innovative work to address this instability. Unfortunately, such institutions with cornerstone programs scarcely exist as the heartbeat of excellence for middle grades schools (Jackson & Davis, 2000). Those few programs which do address that mismatch authentically practice shared curriculum and planning, and organize teaching and learning in such ways that middle level philosophy and structure is equally seen and heard from faculty. Shared curriculum and programmatic redesigns are powerful elements which can work to circumvent the mismatch occurring in schools.

Unfortunately, the ideals and procedures of shared curriculum planning and programmatic redesigns are equally rare. Over the

last two decades, teachers report "little professional collaboration in designing curriculum and sharing practices, and the collaboration that occurs tends to be weak and not focused on strengthening teaching and learning" (Darling-Hammond, Chung Wei, Andree, Richardson, Orphanos, 2009, p. 5). Darling-Hammond, Chung Wei, Andree, Richardson, Orphanos (2009) cite how "teachers spend much more time teaching students and have significantly less time to plan and learn together, and to develop curriculum and instruction than teachers in other nations" (p. 6). These findings are corroborated at the collegiate level given that the goals of producing middle-grades specific teachers from institutions with faculty who also engage in shared curriculum planning appears to be a continued struggle (AMLE, 2011; Beane, 1997; Jackson & Davis, 2000; Mertens, Hurd, & Tilford, 2013; Zeichner & Conklin, 2008).

This study attempts to address this volatile mismatch of collegiate level shared curriculum planning among middle-grades specific programs. It highlights the results of a model of enhanced teaching and learning within one middle level program from which others may benefit. It asks the following question: How does a shared, middle-grades specific library (demonstrating shared curriculum and planning) affect the educational attainment (and comprehension) of students studying within one middle level education program?

Project Background

The Symposium Project began as an internal concept, related to the teaching and learning of Middle Level (ML) program students taking entry-level courses. Part of a university-wide teaching and learning development (TLD) grant, external partnerships with other ML programs across the continental United States were built. The initial planning stage involved sharing ideas with and gaining support from university program faculty. Through various student and faculty surveys, it was learned just how disjointed program courses and assessments were from each other and from comparable universities with similar programmatic offerings. Repetition of certain ML concepts (e.g., adolescent development, teaming, classroom management) was the emphasis in many courses, while other concepts (e.g., common planning time, practical advisory implementation, school law/policy) were weak or completely absent. Similarly, the program made use of superfluous materials and textbooks while not using seminal resources at the expense of its students. These were unessential given that they were out-of-print and/or graduate-level used for teaching undergraduate students about middle level concepts; as a result, students reported not feeling prepared for the challenges of the K -12 classroom. Program consistency for faculty and for students working toward ML degree and licensure was thus warranted.

After the initial planning stage, the *Symposium on Middle Level Teacher Preparation* given by the National Middle School Association (2009) was launched. This symposium was geared toward excellence in teaching, service, and scholarship for middle grades education. By means of this event, the author engaged with a global community of middle level professionals. With the perspectives of the larger ML community, work ensued with program colleagues and students in order to redesign courses and to create a shared, middle-grades specific library.

The amount of research on middle level teacher education (ML) programs with shared, middle-grades specific libraries is limited. Also, the research on successful implementations of shared curriculum and teacher preparation is limited. This is due to the struggles that teacher education in general has faced with shared curriculum and with how to prepare teachers (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Gollnick, 2008; Murray, 2008). The last 30 years have taught us that these conflicts exist, in part, from the lack of agreement seen from within K-12 education itself due to a highly politicized environment. What exactly to teach teacher candidates, much less how to prepare them for successful co-teaching and shared materials, has been historically contentious (Kliebard, 2004). These limitations make it challenging for institutions to change current practices. Similarly, faculty from such institutions with ML programs may find it difficult to engage in such work given that models are scarce.

Outdated examples (Bunte & LoGuidice, 1997; Williamson, 1996) discuss how *rich* materials are needed for those intending to create middle level teacher preparation programs and libraries. In 1997, the University of Wisconsin-Platteville housed CEYA, or the Center of Education for the Young Adolescent. CEYA is a *Designated Middle Level Center of Excellence,* having one of the largest middle-grades specific resource libraries in the country available to middle-grades educators (Bunte & LoGuidice, 1997). The disadvantage is that CEYA is location-specific. It is largely unavailable to those outside of the immediate Wisconsin area. With limited online resources, "all of CEYA's literature holdings are cataloged with the UW-Platteville Karrmann Library…available to faculty and students on campus and to the participating teams during the Teaching the Transescent Seminar" (University of Wisconsin-Platteville, 2014, p. 1). In this way, CEYA limits the materials needed for other locations developing their own ML programs.

Faculty may assume in this technological-age that students themselves can easily find ML education materials. However, recent studies argue otherwise (Darling-Hammond, 2008; Grossman, McDonald, Hammerness, & Ronfeldt, 2008; Johnson & Kardos, 2008; Mitchell, 2008). Teacher candidates lack the fortitude and knowledge to do such work alone, and curriculum libraries remain largely untapped by both faculty and students in teacher preparation programs (Buttlar & Tipton, 1992; Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2008). Murray (2008) further argues that students today need more than a showing and telling of teacher education. This suggests that the work of developing a shared, middle-grades specific library should be decentralized, location-specific for each and every institution.

The benefits of having a shared, middle-grades specific library are supported in the literature. In *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents*, much information is provided which supports the notion of shared curriculum, instruction, and assessment (AMLE, 2011, pp. 15-26). "Although schools and school districts have a prime responsibility for providing ongoing professional development, they should also use the resources that are provided by state departments, colleges, universities, and professional associations" (p. 15-16). This requires that ML programs have these shared resources readily available. The Association for Middle Level Education further advocates that they "have provided the ideals and ideas necessary to establish such programs, wherever they may be housed" (2011, pp. 43). When a lack of teacher preparedness and support in the middle grades exists, the results can be devastating and life-long (Mertens, Hurd, & Tilford, 2013). A major barrier to the advancement and success of the middle school concept "has been the practice of employing teachers who lack specific professional preparation to teach young adolescents" (McEwin & Green, 2010, p. 56-57, as cited in Mertens, Hurd, & Tilford, 2013, p. 303). Therefore, training and

support are vital for advancing the ideals of the AMLE which may be more fully realized with shared, middle-grades specific libraries.

Despite these important elements, ML programs may not make use of shared curriculum, planning, and assessment as evident in middle-grades specific libraries (AMLE, 2011; Beane, 1997; Jackson & Davis, 2000; Mertens, Hurd, & Tilford, 2013; Zeichner & Conklin, 2008). The programs may view any academic holdings "as a subset of and equivalent to those of the main library" (Buttlar & Tipton, 1992, p. 373). Faculty may also see the work of shared libraries as irrelevant, perhaps due to this present technological-age. Perhaps some even view the work as too arduous against the current mainstream and national testing movement (Darling-Hammond & McCloskey, 2011). However, the literature suggests that overall efforts in having students use such program materials can have positive impacts on teaching and learning and in student achievement (Bunte & LoGuidice, 1997; Grossman et al., 2008). The work of developing shared libraries for ML programs is thus vital.

Method

For data analysis and representation, Creswell's (1998) spiral method was used, a custom-built and learned approach, to investigate the many layers of data included in the study. Using significant factors from surveys, field notes and interviews, and quantitative assessments, the author engaged in the process of constructing, deconstructing, and then reconstructing impressions of the data to more fully understand the issues. This method was especially important and useful given the limited research on middle level teacher education (ML) programs with shared, middle-grades specific libraries.

Sample and Data Analysis

Data was gathered for approximately 12 months, from the fall of 2008 to the fall of 2009, through three-interrelated phases: (1) ML faculty and student surveys, (2) site-based field notes and interviews, and (3) quantitative assessments. Results from the implementation of the Symposium Project on newly redesigned courses were also gathered and compared from spring, summer, and fall terms from various courses within the program. Study results and programmatic changes were later disseminated at a regional conference.

Out of the sample of ML program students and faculty, 101 of 133 students (75.9%) and 8 of 10 faculty members (80%) participated in the surveys. This initial sample included students and faculty from entry-level courses (130 and 233) in the fall of 2008. In the spring of 2009, 83 of 136 entry-level students (61%) and 31 upper classmen (100%) participated from 2 sections of one class of the senior-block sequence (333). Then a larger random sample of 930 students enrolled in ML courses later participated in the quantitative analysis during the spring, summer, and fall of 2009. They allowed their final course grades and assessments to be used for the study. However, this paper only will focus on data from the fall of 2008 and spring and fall terms of 2009, given that the data collection process did not continue into the summer of 2010. The larger random sample for this study includes 654 students. Data were collected during classes and during course redesigns and alignments as an ongoing measure to determine any changes in the program courses.

Phase I. Prior to travel and attendance at the *Symposium on Middle Level Teacher Preparation*, survey data on course material preferences were collected from 8 of 10 faculty (80%) and 101 of 133 (75.9%) students in entry-level courses (130 and 233). Participants were provided sample texts corresponding to survey questions. A larger sample of 83 of 136 entry-level students (61%) and 31 upper classmen (100%) from the senior-block (333) were added in the spring of 2009. The constructed, two-part survey included various course textbook titles and descriptions for reference, asking participants their preferences on future course material adoptions, based upon their knowledge and experiences in the ML program (see Appendices A and B).

Phase II. Data from another select sample of 6 participants were also collected via site-based field notes and personal interviews over the course of 3 months. Participants were selected based upon natural research methods and spontaneous encounters. Structured interview sessions focused on programmatic ideas, configurations, and priorities from their middle grades education programs (see Appendix C). These 6 faculty from four separate yet comparable higher education institutions were included: one east coast school (A), one school from the south (B), one mid-west school (C), and one from the west coast (D). Following the procedures of past work (Hurd, 2013, 2012, 2010), namely that of Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) and Wolcott (1994), field notes and interview data were collected during and after the symposium visit over the course of several months. Interviews occurred individually and collectively. These spontaneous yet formal conversations averaged 20 minutes per interview, followed by one or two reciprocal interviews with participants for *coherence* (Eisner, 1998) and *rigorous subjectivity* (Wolcott, 1994).

Open-ended questions were asked of participants for *holistic analysis* (Yin, 2009), focused on critical factors derived from earlier conversations and from observations during site-based field notes. Using a comparison matrix, specific responses were highlighted from interviews to witness *patterned regularities in the data* (Creswell, 1998, p. 152). With an overall sense of these interviews, the author then used patterns to construct comparisons between each participant and the participants collectively with those from the university and against the literature. Comparisons were also analyzed using *consensual validation* (Eisner, 1998), that is, the multiple opinions and perspectives of others by way of additional observations and interviews with other middle level students and faculty. Emerging themes *within* and *across* field notes and interviews (Chase, 2005) were then compared against that of survey data and programmatic changes.

Phase III. Work with program colleagues ensued for preliminary course redesigns in the ML program. Entry courses included: 130, 233, and 233.01. This redesign process took place with faculty individually and in groups over the course of the 2009, 2010, and 2011 academic years. Program projects and assessments for clinical study were realigned through evaluating the goals and objectives of each course. These collaborations were facilitated over several sessions and months through various means: (a) curriculum dialoguing (Apple, 1990; Hawthorne & Henderson, 2000; Senge, 2000); (b) prioritizing (Senge, 2000); and (c) reflecting (Marsh & Willis, 2003). Instructional methodologies were also discussed and realigned. These discussions took place by discussing, circulating, and redistributing commonly used course elements for adoption, such as course directions, projects, and assessments.

Summative data were analyzed from the sample of 654 students who participated in the spring and fall of 2009 from available program assessments. This was National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) data. They were made available from the university and examined for patterns

and/or changes to student achievement. It included specific clinical projects and assessments. These data were all Pre-post measures to evaluate newly redesigned course alignments and the potential impact of the Symposium Project.

Results and Discussion

This section describes and discusses the research findings from analyses of the student and teacher surveys, from collaborating schools' interviews, and from the summative NCATE and course program data. The findings focus primarily on *course perceptions and materials*, and *programmatic assessments*. Student mean scores from course grades and from essential program assessments are disaggregated by term and by type of assessment. This is to determine if the Symposium Project changes, namely the adoption of shared curricula, materials, and assessments, influence program direction and student achievement.

Course Perceptions and Materials

The student and faculty two-part survey contained seven questions concerning eight different course sources (see Appendices A and B). Participants were asked their preferences on these sources and their opinions on adopting a shared, middle-grades specific library. They were asked to consider their years of study and the future as middle level educators when marking preferences. The second portion of the survey asked participants to indicate their preferences for which supplemental course material seemed most important and which they would prefer as a supplemental source for the course(s).

The summary of responses on course material preferences yielded interesting results. The highest percentage of participating faculty (83%) and students (70%) responded that their choice course material included *What Every Middle School Teacher Should Know*. The second highest-ranking choice course material reported was *Introduction to Middle School*. Similarly, the majority of students (85%) preferring an extra source chose *What Every Teacher Should Know About Professionalism in Teaching*. Conversely, the majority of faculty (83%) indicated no preference in supplemental course materials. Their choices were split among the 4 sources. This was an interesting finding given that each entry-level course required different ML texts and materials. There were no shared materials at the time.

Concerning the first survey question, 18% of students reported it was "Very Important," 81% reported it was "Important," and 2% reported it was "Moderately Important" for ML to update program courses. This suggests students felt the ML courses were in need of some revision, especially in terms of materials and perhaps the course offerings themselves. In this regard, one student remarked, "I am learning the same things in each course. Nothing new. It's just a repeat of other courses!" This and other responses also suggest a lack of alignment within ML courses.

The second question, *How important is it for Middle Level Education to update course textbooks,* yielded similar results, with "Very Important" (90%), "Important" (6%) being among the highest ranked responses by students. A smaller percentage (1% and 3%) indicated it was "Moderately Important" and "Of little Importance," respectively. The voluntary comments left by a number of students (4 students) and faculty (50%) indicated an emergent pattern of disaffect for course and/or textbook updates, as compared to instructors who teach with best practices and current strategies. Accordingly, one student mentioned:

> To me, it's more important to have professors who are up to date versus having different books every couple of years. It means we can't sell them back or use them in the future when we have to buy more for other courses. By then, the bookstore won't accept them because the book changed.

The final question had the most interesting results. Although the majority of students indicated having a second textbook for courses was "Unimportant" (93%), it was interesting to note the comments left by a few students and a faculty member on the matter. It was indicated that saving money and fully using the books already required, instead of using only portions, were more important. Accordingly, one student remarked:

> Rather than another book, I like the idea of having the same book or books through all our courses. It saves us money and it is less confusing rather than having to buy different books in each course.

In the same way, a faculty member reported:

> I think the Brown and Knowles book is a little long for an eight-week course [130]. It is okay for this course [233] if it is definitely going to be used in another course as well. In my opinion, students should purchase TP2000 [Turning Points 2000] and a grammar/writing style manual for 130 that will be used throughout the program. During 130, students should order copies of the state learning standards online to have for future classes. I'm open to other suggestions for textbooks, but do not want anything too long or expensive since [sic] I try to use the NMSA site and materials along with other current sources. With all of the project and observation hours required, I have not assigned a great deal of reading. I am not sure if that would change as I got more comfortable with the course.

The two highest ranked course materials—the Brown and Knowles' and Powell's texts—were very similar to the data reported from the 6 faculty of four comparable schools across the US. Schools A, B, C and D (100%) made use of these course materials. On a very basic level, this similarity confirmed the choices reported from preliminary data. However, in examining all the responses, it was interesting to note a few trends. First, even the most comprehensive materials were limited to 1 or 2 course texts. There were no other repeating course materials at any of the schools, suggesting an absence of a shared library within those other programs. One participant (School D) reported that only 2 entry-level courses shared the Brown and Knowles' text. The other schools (75%) reported that no other course materials were shared or used later. When asked about this, two participants (School B) noted:

> Participant one: We don't. They might do it downstairs.
>
> Participant two: I don't know… That's curriculum and foundations.
>
> Participant one: We're kind a separate.
>
> Participant two: We're very…not kind a. We're separate! I do not work with those folks.

"So, you're ML on the 4th floor?" I asked.

> Participant one: Well, there's curriculum and foundations is downstairs, where those earlier courses are taken…So, there's very little communication.

The disjointed nature of these other ML programs was confirmed, showing the majority did not have regular contact with other ML faculty. Interestingly, only one (25%) of the four programs used a text which earlier participants considered to be of

no real relevance to undergraduates. This was in contrast to our ML program's practice whose text was geared more toward graduate or post-graduate study. The data also suggests course materials from the schools (100%) were lacking in current research breadth.

Table 1

Percentages of Students with "Failure" or F Grades in 130, 233, and 233.01

	130	233	233.01
Spring 2009	2%	3%	14%
Fall 2009	0%	3%	4%

Programmatic Assessments

The impact of the course realignments and shared library on student learning within the ML program was noticeably positive. This was seen in gains measured by student achievement scores from program course data. Despite increased enrollments during data collection terms for 130, 233, and 233.01, a decrease in "failure" grades across these target courses was recorded (see Table 1). Interestingly, out of 292 students enrolled during the 2009 spring term, 2%, 3%, and 14% completed the course with an "F" or "failure" grade. As shown in Table 1, the "failure" grades decreased in those courses during the fall of 2009 to 0%, 3%, and 4%, respectively. The decreases took place despite an overall increase seen in enrollments in those target courses from 292 to 362 students, an impressive 24% increase. Even more impressive was the decrease in "failure" grades seen in 233.01, from 14% in the spring of 2009, to 4% in the fall of 2009. This represents a significant decrease (71.4%) of "failure" grades.

An alternative explanation for the significant decrease in "failure" grades initially might be attributed to the differences in course enrollments. In 130 and 233, fewer students were enrolled, as compared to 233.01, in any given term. This is due to the number of education majors taking 233.01 from other programs. Yet the 233.01 percentages are included and remain significant given that the course shares the same ML program assessments, is required for endorsement from the state in order to teach in middle grades schools, and because these affect summative NCATE data results. More importantly, "failure" grades decreased while enrollment increased. Any relationship between enrollment and grades would have suggested otherwise.

The results of the Symposium Project were also positive as seen in gains measured by student mean scores from NCATE assessment data gathered on students' Initial Reflective Essays (IRE), and on students' Live Text Instructional Technology Passport System (ITPS) Performance Competencies E: Idea Development and Presentation Software (ITPS E), and G: Desktop Publishing (ITPS G; see Tables 2-7). The IREs are a means to gather data at the unit and college levels for all teacher candidates to pass their Gateway 1: Admission to Professional Studies. The IRE "requires teacher candidates to assess their strengths, challenges, and beliefs against [the university's] conceptual framework for teacher education, *Realizing the Democratic Ideal.* To successfully complete this requirement, students must achieve a minimum rating of 'basic' in all categories" (Initial Reflective Essay, 2013, p. 1). Students complete the first draft of the IRE in entry-level courses, such as 130. The initial draft is then revised during the student-teaching term.

As shown in Tables 2 and 3, students' overall mean scores in each category of the IRE assessment increased. The total enrollments for 130 during the spring and fall 2009 terms were the same: 60 students. The categories are based on a 4-point scale, where 1 represents "weak," 2 "basic," 3 "strong," and 4 "outstanding". The minimum requirement of a "basic" or 2-score and/or higher in all IRE categories was met by 96.7% of the students for the spring of 2009. Approximately .03% of the class, or 2 students, received the 1-score in just a single IRE category for the spring of 2009. Comparatively, 96.7% of the students met the minimum 2-score

Table 2

Mean Performance Scores of Students in IRE Assessment For Spring 2009

Spring 09- IRE	Weak (1pts)	Basic (2 pts)	Strong (3 pts)	Outstanding (4 pts)	Mean	Mode	*SD*
Discussion of virtues	0	2	36	22	3.33	3	0.54
Plan for Professional Growth to Address Challenges	0	4	35	21	3.28	3	0.58
Level of Reflection	0	2	37	21	3.32	3	0.53
Logic	0	3	34	23	3.33	3	0.57
Grammar and Mechanics	2	7	30	20	3.15	3	0.75

Table 3

Mean Performance Scores of Students in IRE Assessment For Fall 2009

Fall 09-IRE	Weak (1pts)	Basic (2 pts)	Strong (3 pts)	Outstanding (4 pts)	Mean	Mode	*SD*
Discussion of virtues	2	0	23	35	3.52	4	0.67
Plan for Professional Growth to Address Challenges	2	3	20	35	3.47	4	0.74
Level of Reflection	2	4	21	32	3.41	4	0.76
Logic	2	1	24	33	3.47	4	0.69
Grammar and Mechanics	2	0	33	25	3.35	3	0.65

requirement in each IRE category for the fall of 2009. The items in Table 8 represent the percentage changes between the terms. For example, the greatest percentage increase was 6.35%, while the smallest increase seen in any single category was 2.7%. An overall 5% average increase was seen in student means.

Similarly, student mean scores increased on the Live Text assessment competency ITPS E. Unlike the IRE, ITPS E was a measure used for teacher candidates for Gateway 2: Admission to Student Teaching. The University Live Text Portal Website states, "For the combined assignment of Idea Development and Presentation Software, the student will create a presentation slide show that would be used for an educational purpose, such as instruction, curriculum or administration" (2013, p. 1). For our program, students were also required to provide a detailed rationale on the slide show project and why a concept map or diagram was chosen. These areas were directly related to middle level philosophy and structure and to the development of young adolescents.

The ITPS E assessment was administered to the same set of students from course 130, with nearly identical enrollment from the spring 2009 to the fall 2009: 59 and 60 students, respectively (see Tables 4 and 5). Despite a marginal increase (1.69%) in enrollment from the spring to the fall of 2009, student mean scores increased in all but three categories, or in 23%, for ITPS E. The 13 categories are based on a 3-point scale, where 1 represents

Table 4

Mean Performance Scores of Students in ITPS E Assessment in Spring 2009

Spring 09- ITPS E	Does Not meet (1 pts)	Target (2 pts)	Exemplary (3pts)	Mean	Mode	*SD*
Purpose/ Rationale	0	17	42	2.71	3	0.45
Presentation Template	0	39	21	2.35	2	0.48
Title Slide	0	12	48	2.8	3	0.4
Titles	0	20	40	2.67	3	0.47
Bullets	0	4	56	2.93	3	0.25
Imported Image	1	13	46	2.75	3	0.47
Clip-Art	0	24	36	2.6	3	0.49
Hyperlinks	1	10	48	2.8	3	0.44
Graphic Organizer	0	16	44	2.73	3	0.44
Graphic Organizers Details, Visual Appeal and Flow	0	23	37	2.62	3	0.49
Spelling/ Grammar	0	25	35	2.58	3	0.49
Font Usage	0	15	45	2.75	3	0.43
Language Usage	0	25	35	2.58	3	0.49

Table 5

Mean Performance Scores of Students in ITPS E Assessment in Fall 2009

Fall 09- ITPS E	Does Not meet (1 pts)	Target (2 pts)	Exemplary (3pts)	Mean	**Mode**	***SD***
Purpose/ Rationale	3	27	30	2.45	3	0.59
Presentation Template	2	29	29	2.45	3	0.56
Title Slide	2	14	44	2.7	3	0.53
Titles	2	5	53	2.85	3	0.44
Bullets	2	5	53	2.85	3	0.44
Imported Image	2	6	52	2.83	3	0.45
Clip-Art	2	1	57	2.92	3	0.38
Hyperlinks	2	7	51	2.82	3	0.47
Graphic Organizer	2	11	47	2.75	3	0.5
Graphic Organizers Details, Visual Appeal and Flow	2	18	40	2.63	3	0.55
Spelling/ Grammar	2	17	41	2.65	3	0.54
Font Usage	2	9	49	2.78	3	0.49
Language Usage	2	10	48	2.77	3	0.5

"does not meet," 2 "target," and 3 "exemplary". The minimum requirement of a "target" or 2-score and/or higher in all ITPS E categories was met by 98.3% of the students for the spring of 2009. 1 student, .017% of the class, received a 1-score in two different ITPS E categories for the spring of 2009. Comparatively, 96.7% of the students met the minimum 2-score requirement or higher in each ITPS E category for the fall of 2009. The items in Table 9 show the percentage changes between the terms. The greatest percentage was 12.3%, while the smallest increase was .038%. Decreases in 3 categories were seen, the greatest being 9.59%. This resulted in an overall 1.79% average increase in student means.

Assessment competency ITPS G yielded marginal results for courses 233 and 233.01. As with ITPS E, students were required to pass competency ITPS G in 233 or 233.01 for admission to their student teaching. Accordingly, "students [were] required to create a document using a desktop publishing tool…which [was] designed to be used in an educational setting. The document [could be] designed as a communication between home and school, or for instructional purposes" (Live Text, 2013, p. 1).

The 11 categories for ITPS G are based on the same 3-point scale designations as ITPS E. The total enrollments for 233 and 233.01 during the spring and fall 2009 terms were 160 and 273 students, respectively (see Tables 6 and 7). Despite this significant increase (70.625%) in enrollments, student mean scores increased slightly in all but 3 categories, or in 27.2%, for ITPS G. Nearly 79% of the students in the spring of 2009 met the minimum requirement of a "target" or 2-score and/or higher in all ITPS G categories. 34 students, or 21.2% of the class, received at least a single 1-score in one or more ITPS G categories for the spring of 2009. In a somewhat similar fashion, nearly 70% of the students met the minimum 2-score requirement or higher in each ITPS E category for the fall of 2009. Items in Table 10 show the percentage changes between the terms. The greatest percentage increase was 5.68%, while the smallest increase was .07%. Decreases in 3 categories

Table 6
Mean Performance Scores of Students in ITPS G Assessment in Spring 2009

Spring 09- ITPS G	Does Not meet (1 pts)	Target (2 pts)	Exemplary (3pts)	Mean	Mode	*SD*
Rationale	9	74	77	2.42	3	0.6
Articles	1	30	129	2.8	3	0.42
Columns	0	40	119	2.75	3	0.43
Headlines	0	30	130	2.81	3	0.39
Font	0	25	135	2.84	3	0.36
Font Style	1	55	104	2.64	3	0.49
Text Flow	0	64	96	2.6	3	0.49
Graphics	0	27	132	2.83	3	0.38
Graphics Type	1	40	119	2.74	3	0.45
Spatial Considerations	1	57	102	2.63	3	0.5
Mechanics	34	73	53	2.12	2	0.73

Table 7
Mean Performance Scores of Students in ITPS G Assessment in Fall 2009

Fall 09- ITPS G	Does Not meet (1 pts)	Target (2 pts)	Exemplary (3pts)	Mean	Mode	*SD*
Rationale	6	132	135	2.47	3	0.54
Articles	0	74	199	2.73	3	0.44
Columns	0	53	219	2.81	3	0.4
Headlines	0	40	232	2.85	3	0.35
Font	12	50	211	2.73	3	0.53
Font Style	0	57	216	2.79	3	0.41
Text Flow	9	76	188	2.66	3	0.54
Graphics	0	36	235	2.87	3	0.34
Graphics Type	0	65	206	2.76	3	0.43
Spatial Considerations	7	75	191	2.67	3	0.52
Mechanics	83	99	90	2.03	2	0.8

were seen, the greatest being 4.24%. This resulted in an average increase of .06% seen in student means.

Although a significant increase of 70.625% in student enrollment occurred for 233 and 233.01, student mean scores still increased. As with the IRE, the ITPS E and ITPS G assessments are nominal categorical with more than two levels. One might expect either a positive or negative correlation coefficient, meaning that as the number of students enrolled increased or decreased from one term to the next, so would the mean score variables. Yet this is not the case given that these Tables are descriptive statistics. That is, there is no relationship between the variables because the data is clearly nominal categorical, with more than two levels. The mean scores are independent of each other, thus rendering the correlation coefficient as inappropriate for application. More importantly, this fact suggests the increase to student mean scores may have resulted from an external variable, such as the Symposium Project and/or shared library.

Table 8

Percentage Changes in Spring 2009 and Fall 2009 IRE Assessment Mean Scores

Fall	Spring	Change	Percentage + / -
3.52	3.33	0.057057	5.705706
3.47	3.28	0.057927	5.792683
3.41	3.32	0.027108	2.710843
3.47	3.33	0.042042	4.204204
3.35	3.15	0.063492	6.349206
		Average	4.952529

Table 9

Percentage Changes in Spring 2009 and Fall 2009 ITPS E Assessment Mean Scores

Fall	Spring	Change	Percentage + / -
2.45	2.71	-0.09594	-9.5941
2.45	2.35	0.042553	4.255319
2.7	2.8	-0.03571	-3.57143
2.85	2.67	0.067416	6.741573
2.85	2.93	-0.0273	-2.73038
2.83	2.75	0.029091	2.909091
2.92	2.6	0.123077	12.30769
2.82	2.8	0.007143	0.714286
2.75	2.73	0.007326	0.732601
2.63	2.62	0.003817	0.381679
2.65	2.58	0.027132	2.713178
2.78	2.75	0.010909	1.090909
2.77	2.58	0.073643	7.364341
		Average	1.793444

Upon closer analysis of survey and interview data, and of the realignment process itself, three themes surfaced. Using Creswell's (1998) *spiral* method, the heart of qualitative data analysis, the author classified and interpreted data into these three themes. The themes include awareness, urgency, and collegiality. These themes speak to the perceptions of and materials used (or not used) by ML students and faculty, as well as the students' gains seen in programmatic assessments.

Table 10

Percentage Changes in Spring 2009 and Fall 2009 ITPS G Assessment Mean Scores

Fall	Spring	Change	Percentage + / -
2.47	2.42	0.02066116	2.066116
2.73	2.8	-0.025	-2.5
2.81	2.75	0.02181818	2.181818
2.85	2.81	0.01423488	1.423488
2.73	2.84	-0.0387324	-3.87324
2.79	2.64	0.05681818	5.681818
2.66	2.6	0.02307692	2.307692
2.87	2.83	0.01413428	1.413428
2.76	2.74	0.00729927	0.729927
2.67	2.63	0.01520913	1.520913
2.03	2.12	-0.0424528	-4.24528
		Average	0.609698

Awareness and Urgency

An awareness of current middle grades concepts and practices was initially weak among participants, possibly stemming from an absence of seminal course materials and shared practices among faculty. This was seen in course comments, grades, and in course discussions with students. NCATE data collected prior to the shared library implementation also demonstrated this fact. Participants felt the most current and advanced information concerning middle-grades education was not at their disposal. In the same way, there was a great sense of urgency to rectify the matter, by being the best prepared to teach about and within ML schools. This urgency came as a result of the notion that perhaps we were not offering the strongest program for our students. Being the only recognized ML program in the state, this sense of urgency quickly grew. The awareness and urgency led to the adoption of a shared library and some initial course realignment. Yet the collegiality and time needed for such ML work was (and still is) hard to come by.

The emergence of the themes of awareness and urgency was substantiated in the research and literature. Mertens, Hurd, and Tilford (2013) found similar results in the challenges facing teachers in public schools. The absence of awareness and in urgency, resulting from a lack of training and use in common planning time (CPT) and in other ML practices, was apparent and affected the full implementation of ML structures, namely teaming and CPT. Furthermore, the lack of time and expertise needed for shared curriculum planning (Hurd, 2013) affected the outcomes of educators' perceptions with ML concepts and the overall benefits of ML education.

The comments given by students and faculty alike revealed how the required course texts, at the time, may have been of little help and significance. Instead, comments seem to suggest that selling back books was of more importance to students than benefitting from the readings. It was also apparent that students and faculty were in need of rich resources which could provide philosophical and technical aspects on ML education; but the courses and materials were not providing that experience. Thus, the

heightened sense of awareness remained while the urgency to change continued to grow.

Collegiality

In the spring of 2009, faculty collaborated on the preliminary results of the data. Program projects and assessments for clinical study, the goals and objectives of each course, and the course materials themselves were the foci of discussions. A method referred to as *curriculum dialoguing* (Apple, 1990; Hawthorne & Henderson, 2000; Senge, 2000) was used to move along initial thoughts about the courses. Then prioritizing (Senge, 2000) and reflecting (Marsh & Willis, 2003) were used to gain consistency and vision for the direction of entry-level courses and the program overall. It was then the author shared the results of what other institutions used for their course materials. Through these means instructional methodologies and course objectives and structures were realigned. Commonly used course elements were circulated for adoption, such as course directions, projects, and assessments (i.e., Live Text ITPS Assessments C, E, G), to achieve program consistency. Most importantly, collaboration ensued for adopting a shared, middle-grades specific library based on the data collected and discussions held regarding what was taught (or not taught) within entry-level courses.

It was decided upon to revise the summer and fall 2009 courses for 130, 233, and 233.01 as that period was the earliest the shared library implementation could take place. This library would be required when students enrolled in entry-level courses. On course syllabi, it stated, "The texts are available at both university bookstores, or online. The two (2) chapter PDFs are available through course reserve at the university's library." It came with the understanding that the shared library would stay the same throughout the remainder of the program. The block (333, 390, 395, and 398) would also make use of the shared library. The materials and texts chosen for the library (at that time) included the following:

1. For 130 and/or 233:
   a. *What every middle school teacher should know* (Brown & Knowles, 2007).
   b. *Pocket style manual* (Hacker, 2010).
   c. *Turning points 2000: Educating adolescents in the 21st century* (Jackson & Davis, 2000).
   d. *This we believe: Keys to educating young adolescents* (NMSA, 2010).
   e. *Teaching ten to fourteen year olds: Chapters 2 and 3* (Stevenson, 2002).
   f. State Learning Standards and/or Common Core Standards, online.
2. For 233.01:
   a. *Introduction to middle school* (Powell, 2010; adopted in 2011).
   b. *What every teacher should know about multicultural and global education* (Brown & Kysilka, 2008).
   c. *MyEducationLab* (Pearson, 2010).

The guidelines for creating sustainable teacher education and for shared libraries were met in these revisions (Bunte & LoGuidice, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Johnson & Kardos, 2008; Mitchell, 2008; Zeichner & Conklin, 2008). Students were provided current articles, as appropriate for each course. More importantly, faculty and students cooperated to find and understand the necessary tools and resources for a rich ML program. For instance, some students transferred into the ML program from community colleges; they would concurrently enroll in courses 130 and 233 and thus be out-of-sequence with other ML majors. By having a shared library, it was fortuitous for students and faculty alike. Repetition was diminished and faculty and students collaborated on missing elements from each of the materials.

Personal Transformations for Awareness, Urgency, and Collegiality

The findings of this study demonstrate how a shared, middle-grades specific library can address the *volatile mismatch* of shared curriculum planning among one middle level program and how this library positively affects the educational attainment of students. In order to implement the program changes, however, program faculty had to first confront themselves with that same awareness, urgency, and collegiality. That is where the work truly began. Seeking certain levels of personal transformation, faculty had to begin by looking inward. As stated of any ML educator:

> These considerations moreover require educators to advocate for their students. They must collectively acknowledge that middle schools need to have the compatibility to adjust to students' cultural needs. If this compatibility is lacking within their schools, then educators must seek out, organize, and then construct this rich environment on their own. This is being student-centered towards social justice. (Hurd, 2012, p. 124)

Accordingly, an educator's self-identity and disposition in the work place are vital places to begin the investigations for change (Hurd, 2010) which are usually (or at the very least should be) asked of one's own students. Being willing and able to actively reflect on one's own practices, those which are advocated for ML students, is vital for rich implemental changes. The ML program and the transformations experienced would have remained superficial, even duplicitous without that reflection.

Once an awareness and personal sense of urgency occurred, collegiality for change within the ML program followed. This transformation occurred with the continual examination and understanding of the shared process. For instance, the ongoing collection of opinions and needs among faculty and students became even more dynamic. Why? These elements strengthened the work of creating a shared library for the program. The need to differentiate exactly how that shared library works and is used is up to each program and its needs, its students, and its faculty. Some may reason that a tangible library is useful. Others may see benefits in creating a combination of print and electronic libraries. Still others may see more benefits in online libraries and resources. The vital aspect in having a ML shared library is not so much in the form but in having one to work with in the first place.

There is of course some natural trepidation for beginning such innovative work in programs and schools which have been, as of late, highly criticized from more centralized control and regimes (Popham, 2008). Accordingly, there is hesitation among those who follow closely the state and national movements on testing and curriculum. These centralized control movements (and resulting fears), however, are not new to the educational field. In fact, Randi and Corno (1997) cite:

> Despite the efforts of some teachers to create learner-centered classrooms [or programs] where curriculum grows out of students' interests, conservative policy makers with a different view of "improved instruction" continue to impose more control over teachers and teaching through the institution of the national and state curriculum, national standards, and assessments that hold teachers and students accountable (pp. 1182-83).

The guidance of others who encourage educators and students alike to remain vigilant in the fight against those who seek to dismantle true education must be heeded. True education is innovative and relational, not simply predetermined (see Noddings, 2011; Ornstein, 2011; Palmer, 2011).

Conclusion

As illustrated in the findings of this study, a greater awareness and sense of urgency and collegiality for change within the university ML program occurred, stemming from the Symposium Project. Student gains were seen in knowledge of ML courses and of the state and nationally accredited ML programs. These increases took place when the ML program adopted a shared library. An expanded and enhanced ML program resulted from the work, allowing faculty to engage with various networks for course/program redesigns and realignments. Faculty also explored perceptions and understandings of programmatic evaluations and assessments. More importantly, faculty engaged in the very process, namely shared curriculum planning, to which they espouse for their students. The process was transformative. Unfortunately, this same work does not reflect the norm of other programs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Yet several conclusions can be drawn from this study's findings which may prove beneficial for other ML programs interested in similar work.

Parkison (2009), in a recent case study on the professional dispositions of middle grades preservice teachers, demonstrated the importance of embedding an understanding of teacher responsibility within the context of the classroom environment. He identified how preservice teachers were more able to reflect on their fluid profession and middle-grades students, "more willing to question, critique, investigate," their roles based upon a facilitated reflective professional practice (p. 803). It should be the same for collegiate faculty who themselves aim for such goals and personal responsibility. By authentically practicing and organizing their teaching and learning in such ways, middle level philosophy and structure can be equally seen and heard from faculty.

Comments shared by ML students across program courses revealed faculty were not engaged in the work of shared curricula and materials. Students recognized the *volatile mismatch* of shared curriculum planning at the collegiate level. In other words, students did not need nor want another *show and tell* of teacher education (Murray, 2008). The need for the ML program to consider the next level of implementation by means of a shared library was evident. In order to order to meet candidates' needs and the changing needs of middle schools across the landscape, it was necessary to adopt a shared library reflective of the shared work among program faculty. The results led to shared planning, curricula, and assessments and the implementation of a rich, ML library. Gains were also seen in students' achievement, mean scores on program and NCATE assessments, and in their overall understanding of ML concepts and practices. Moreover, faculty reported changes in students' overall feelings toward the program and of individual courses.

As faculty members, it is critical to collect and analyze data concerning the level of preparation of the ML students. This was to ensure that national recommendations we being met or exceeded, as well as the needs of the schools and districts hiring graduates. Prior to the shared library, informal discussions and work perhaps occurred once every 3-5 years, without much alignment between courses. It was quickly realized this level of engagement was insufficient to actually do the very work being asked of students. A shared library of resources was considered which students would have from the beginning of courses to the end, even for use during student teaching and for initial years as middle grades educators.

To that end, faculty began the process of meeting regularly to discuss program alignments with state changes in licensure and with national program standards and vision. Data collection (pre & post) from ML students during their block courses and student teaching began. This was to better assess their levels of preparation to successfully educate young adolescents in middle school settings. As a result, master syllabi were created for all courses, especially entry-level courses, and collaborations ensued between program faculty and non-tenure track instructors (NTTs). But the work continues (as it should). Faculty will again find themselves in the throes of another, major program realignment, with licensure and standards considered. And once again, faculty will have to confront themselves and their work (Hurd, 2010, 2012).

Limitations of the Study

There are some limitations to this study. The data gathered represent the courses and terms during which the Symposium Project took place and during which the ML program at the university had six full-time faculty members. It suggests the Symposium Project had significant effects on the overall program and students' achievement and understanding of ML concepts. However, the interpretations of the data need to be considered within the scope of the study. Although additional observations and interviews took place with various faculty from institutions of comparable size and program, the author did not conduct site-visits. Therefore, documentation of external program activities and materials was not made. Furthermore, while the effects are strong and compelling for gains seen in mean scores, data spanning multiple academic years was not gathered for potential project impact or analysis. Future studies could benefit from large-scale and long-term qualitative and quantitative analysis, examining how different programs among external ML teacher preparation schools fair with shared, middle-grades specific libraries. However, the use of the Symposium Project on enhanced teaching and learning toward adopting a shared ML library may still offer a model from which others may benefit.

The changes to the university's ML program, resulting from this Symposium Project, suggest similar work at other middle-grades institutions may also occur if an adoption is made of a rich ML library. This library must include the most current and best literature available on middle grades education. But the literature is ever changing. Hence, it is incumbent upon those leading the profession and, more importantly, leading the charge for middle-grades education to first engage in the very work to which they espouse for others. If faculty, for instance, within collegiate ML programs can institute the same reflective practices upon their own craft and curricula, if they can engage in the process toward a sustained ML library focused around ML concepts and students, the likelihood will be of systematic and lasting change to ML programs! Thus, the very programs which prepare middle-grades teachers which somehow scarcely exist may actually thrive and even grow with such ideals.

References

Alexander, W. M., & McEwin, C. K. (1984). Training the middle level educator: Where does the solution lie? *NASSP Bulletin, 68* (6), 6-11.

Alexander, W. M., & McEwin, C. K. (1989). *Schools in the middle: Status and progress*. Columbus, OH: National Middle School Association.

Apple, M. W. (1990). *Ideology and curriculum* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Association of Middle Level Education. (2011). *This we believe: Keys to educating young adolescents*. Westerville, OH: Author.

Beane, J. A. (1997). *Curriculum integration. Designing the core of democratic education*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Brown, D. F. (2002). *Becoming a successful urban teacher*. Portsmouth, NH & Westerville, OH: Heinemann & National Middle School Association.

Brown, D. F., & Knowles, T. (2007). *What every middle school teacher should know* (2nd ed.). Portsmouth: Heinemann.

Brown, S. C., & Kysilka, M. (2008). *What every teacher should know about multicultural and global education*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Bunte, A. B., & LoGuidice, T. (1997). The Platteville Seminar model: Changing middle level education. *Middle School Journal, 28*(5), 21-26.

Buttlar, L., & Tipton, M. (1992). Library use and staff training in curriculum materials centers. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship, 17*(6), 370-374.

Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. (1989). *Turning points: Preparing American youth for the 21st century: The report of the task force on education of young adolescent*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

Chase, S. E. (2005). Narrative inquiry: Multiple lenses, approaches, voice. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 651-680). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Clark, S. N., & Clark, D. C. (1993). Middle level school reform: The rhetoric and the reality. *The Elementary School Journal, 93*(5), 447-460.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Fries, K. (2008). Research on teacher education: Changing times, changing paradigms. In M. Cochran-Smith, S. Feiman-Nemser, D. J. McIntrye, & K. E. Demers (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: Enduring questions in changing contexts* (3rd ed., pp. 1050-1093). New York: Routledge.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2008). Knowledge for teaching: What we know. In M. Cochran-Smith , S. Feiman-Nemser, D. J. McIntrye, & K. E. Demers (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: Enduring questions in changing contexts* (3rd ed., pp. 1316-1323). New York: Routledge.

Darling-Hammond, L., Chung Wei, R., Andree, A., Richardson, N., & Orphanos, S. (2009). *Professional learning in the learning profession: A status report on teacher development in the Unites States and abroad*. Retrieved from http://www.learningforward. org/ docs/pdf/ nsdcstudy2009.pdf

Darling-Hammond, L., & McCloskey, L. (2011). Assessment for learning around the world: what it would mean to be internationally competitive. In A. C. Ornstein, E. F. Pajak, & S. B. Ornstein (Eds.) *Contemporary issues in curriculum* (5th ed., pp. 336-347). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Eisner, E. W. (1998). *The enlightened eye: Qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Floyd, O. R. (1932). *The preparation of junior high school teachers*. U.S. Office of Education Bulletin, No. 20. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Gaskill, P. E. (2002). Progress in the certification of middle level personnel. *Middle School Journal, 33*(5), 33-40.

Gollnick, D. M. (2008). Teacher capacity for diversity. In M. Cochran-Smith , S. Feiman-

Nemser, D. J. McIntrye, & K. E. Demers (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: Enduring questions in changing contexts* (3rd ed., pp. 249-257). New York: Routledge.

Grossman, P., McDonald, M., Hammerness, K., & Ronfeldt, M. (2008). Dismantling dichotomies in teacher education. In M. Cochran-Smith , S. Feiman-Nemser, D. J. McIntrye, & K. E. Demers (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: Enduring questions in changing contexts* (3rd ed., pp. 243-248). New York: Routledge.

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2007). *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Hawthorne, R., & Henderson, J. (2000). *Transformative curriculum leadership: Transformative curriculum design and planning*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Hurd, E. (2010). Confessions of belonging: My emotional journey as a medical translator. *Qualitative Inquiry, 16*(10), 783-791. doi: 10.1177/1077800410383117

Hurd, E. (2012). A framework for understanding multicultural identities: An investigation of a middle level student's French-Canadian Honduran-American (Mestizo) identity. *Middle Grades Research Journal, 7*(2), 111-127.

Hurd, E. (2013). Lessons learned: A case of one teacher's common planning time experience. In S. B. Mertens, V. A. Anfara, Jr., M. Caskey, & N. Flowers (Eds.), *Common planning time in middle level schools: Research Studies from the MLER SIG's national project* (pp. 149-168). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Illinois State University. (2013). Initial Reflective Essay. Retrieved from http://education. illinoisstate.edu /teacher_education/ gateway1/reflective_essay.shtml

Jackson, A. W., & Davis, G. A. (2000). *Turning Points 2000: Educating adolescents in the 21st century*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Johnson, S. M., & Kardos, S. M. (2008). The next generation of teachers: Who enters, who stays, and why. In M. Cochran-Smith, S. Feiman-Nemser, D. J. McIntrye, & K. E. Demers (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: Enduring questions in changing contexts* (3rd ed., pp. 445-467). New York: Routledge.

Kliebard, H. M. (2004). *The struggle for the American curriculum: 1893 -1958* (3rd edition). New York, NY: Taylor & Francis Books.

Koos, L. V. (1927). *The junior high school*. Boston, MA: Ginn and Company.

Live Text: Teacher Education Portfolio. (2013). *University live text portal*. Retrieved from https://www.livetext.com/ doc/3756948/19023080

Marsh, C., & Willis, G. (2003). *Curriculum: Alternative approaches, ongoing issues* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

McDougald, D., & Bowie, M. (1997). *Information services for secondary schools*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

McEwin, C. K., Dickinson, T. S., Erb, T. O., & Scales, P. C. (1995). *A vision of excellence: Organizing principles for middle grades teacher preparation*. Columbus, OH: National Middle School Association.

Mertens, S. B., Hurd, E., & Tilford, K. (2013). The Implementation and use of middle level common planning time: A study of four middle schools. In S. B. Mertens, V. A. Anfara, Jr., M. Caskey, & N. Flowers (Eds.), *Common planning time in middle level schools: Research studies from the MLER SIG's national project* (pp. 287-306). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Mitchell, L. S. (2008). Growth of teachers in professional maturity. In M. Cochran-Smith , S. Feiman-Nemser, D. J. McIntrye, & K. E. Demers (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: Enduring questions in changing contexts* (3rd ed., pp. 800-807). New York: Routledge.

Murray, F. B. (2008). The role of teacher education courses in teaching by second nature. In M. Cochran-Smith , S. Feiman-Nemser, D. J. McIntrye, & K. E. Demers (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: Enduring questions in changing contexts* (3rd ed., pp. 1228-1246). New York: Routledge.

National Middle School Association. (1991). *Professional certification and preparation for the middle level: A position paper of National Middle School Association*. Columbus, OH: Author.

Noddings, N. (2011). Teaching themes of care. In A. C. Ornstein, E. F. Pajak, & S. B. Ornstein (Eds.) *Contemporary issues in curriculum* (5th ed., pp. 54-61). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Ornstein, A. C. (2011). Critical issues in teaching. In A. C. Ornstein, E. F. Pajak, & S. B. Ornstein (Eds.) *Contemporary issues in curriculum* (5th ed., pp. 75-93). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Palmer, P. (2011). The heart of a teacher. In A. C. Ornstein, E. F. Pajak, & S. B. Ornstein (Eds.) *Contemporary issues in curriculum* (5th ed., pp. 62-74). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Parkison, P. (2009). Field-based preservice teacher research: Facilitating reflective professional practice. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*, 798-804.

Popham, J. (2008). Curriculum, instruction, and assessment: Amiable allies or phony friends? In B. S. Stern & M. L. Kysilka (Eds.), *Contemporary readings in curriculum* (pp. 283-290). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Randi, J., & Corno, L. (1997). Teachers as innovators. In B. J. Biddle, T. L. Good, & I. F. Goodson (Eds.), *International handbook of teachers and teaching: Part two* (pp. 1163-1221). Boston, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Senge, P. (2000). *Schools that learn: A fifth discipline*. Broadway, NY: Doubleday.

Stevenson, C. (2002). *Teaching ten to fourteen year olds* (3rd ed.). Boston: Pearson Allyn & Bacon.

Strahan, D., L'Esperance, M., & Van Hoose, J. (2009). *Promoting harmony: Young adolescent development and classroom practices* (3rd ed.). Westerville, OH: National Middle School Association. National Middle School Association (2009). Symposium on middle level teacher preparation. Retrieved from http://www.scribd.com/full/8737024?access_key=key2dshbabyx3ivlu47bjmr

Tanner, J. M. (1971). Sequence, tempo, and individual variation in the growth and development of boys and girls aged twelve to sixteen. *Daedalus, 100*, 907-930.

University of Wisconsin-Platteville (2014). *Center of education for the young adolescent*. Retrieved from http://www.uwplatt.edu/ceya/

Williamson, R. D. (1996). Teacher education curriculum: Middle level education. In J. Sikula, T. J. Buttery, & E. Guyton (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (2nd ed., pp. 378-391). New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan.

Wolcott, H. F. (1994). *Transforming qualitative data: Description, analysis, and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Zeichner, K., & Conklin, H. G. (2008). Teacher education programs as sites or teacher preparation. In M. Cochran-Smith, S. Feiman-Nemser, D. J. McIntrye, and K. E. Demers (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: Enduring questions in changing contexts* (3rd ed., pp. 1228-1246). New York: Routledge.

Appendix A
Survey: Part I

Thank you for your participation in this Middle Level Education Survey. The purpose of this survey is to provide the Middle Level Education Program with your honest opinions about textbooks so that we can build better courses and learning environments for you and others.

All of your responses are kept confidential and will not be linked in any way to your course or course grade.

This survey will only take a few minutes for you to complete. We will continue collecting survey data through the Fall of 2009.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Dr. Ellis Hurd.

Book 1: *What Every Middle School Teachers Should Know*—Brown and Knowles
Book 2: *Introduction to Middle School*—Powell
Book 3: *Turning Points 2000: Educating Adolescents in the 21st Century*—Jackson and Davis
Book 4: *This We Believe in Action*—Erb (ed.) and AMLE

How important do the following textbooks seem for this course (130 and 233)?	Unimportant		Of Little Importance		Moderately Important		Important		Very Important	
1. What Every Middle School Teacher Should Know										
2. Introduction to Middle School										
3. Turning Points 2000										
4. This We Believe in Action										

Which textbook(s) do you think fit this course?	Choose Only two Numbers				
1. What Every Middle School Teacher Should Know	**1**			**1**	
2. Introduction to Middle School	**2**			**2**	
3. Turning Points 2000	**3**			**3**	
4. This We Believe in Action	**4**			**4**	

How important is it for Middle Level Education to update courses?	Unimportant	Of Little Importance	Moderately Important	Important	Very Important

How important is it for Middle Level Education to update course textbooks?	Unimportant	Of Little Importance	Moderately Important	Important	Very Important

Provide your feedback on the following course and/or program related areas:

Structure/Organization

- Shadow:
- Courses:
- Clinicals:

Philosophy

- Major / Minor:
- Endorsement:
- Research:

Curricula

- Priorities:
- Organizations:
- Themes:

Appendix B
Survey: Part II

Book 1: ***What Every Teacher Should Know About Your First Year of Teaching: Guidelines for Success, 5e-Kellough***
Book 2: ***What Every Teacher Should Know About Professionalism in Teaching, 2e-Hurst and Reding***
Book 3: ***What Every Teacher Should Know About Educational Assessment, 1e- Popham***
Book 4: ***What Every Teacher Should Know About Adaptations and Accommodations for Students with Mild to Moderate Disabilities, 1e- Carter, Prater, and Dyches***

How important do the following textbooks seem for this course?	Unimportant	Of Little Importance	Moderately Important	Important	Very Important
1. What Every Teacher Should Know About Your First Year of Teaching					
2. What Every Teacher Should Know About Professionalism in Teaching					
3. What Every Teacher Should Know About Educational Assessment					
4. What Every Teacher Should Know About Adaptations and Accommodations for Students with Mild to Moderate Disabilities					

Which textbook would you prefer as an extra (free) source for this course?	Choose Only <u>One</u> Letter
1. What Every Teacher Should Know About Your First Year of Teaching	**A**
2. What Every Teacher Should Know About Professionalism in Teaching	**B**
3. What Every Teacher Should Know About Educational Assessment	**C**
4. What Every Teacher Should Know About Adaptations and Accommodations for Students with Mild to Moderate Disabilities	**D**

How important is a second textbook for this course?	Unimportant	Of Little Importance	Moderately Important	Important	Very Important

Appendix C
Interview Patterns

School	130	233
School A	Introduction to ML done by different instructors; now each course does a side bar introduction to ML with specialization; 1 hour devoted to the ML concepts.	100 hours: aligned with NMSA standards; classroom practice integrated within ML classroom; teachers (k-12) teach students with contract to take course at university; 40 with one content, 40 with other content teacher.
Textbook(s) used	Brown and Knowles; Powell; want 1 or 2 texts used in multiple settings but not being done.	This We Believe; NMSA research; DVD from This We Believe in Action; Powell text is recommended.
School B	4-8 endorsement; courses organized thematically; new theme each week; themes are topical (like ISU), but 1 overall theme: literacy is infused into all areas of learning; it drives everything.	4 year program; shadow is 1 day with This we Believe in Action, and other Middle School Journal research articles.
Textbook(s) used	They do not know because disjointed at earlier levels; No TP used.	This We Believe in Action used with DVD; Brown and Knowles; reference to Powell; No Turning Points 2000 used.
School C	Block courses (3 of them); 25, 25, and then 100 clinical hours before student teaching; 3 person team at ML to design courses; Don't have any NTTs in program; teachers (k-12) also teach courses for ML program.	Shadow not done anymore (too monolithic); they conduct advocacy interview for young adolescent health and wellness issues and project (Tri-fold / PowerPoint, etc.); use 7 common assessments from NCATE to organize Curriculum, but not thematic; NCATE driven is "philosophy".
Textbook(s) used	Powell is only text used throughout; NMSA web site for research (Journals, Student voice, Pod casts; videos).	All online; Health and Wellness Performance students see a health and wellness presentation; use Promoting Harmony, web sites, This We Believe, and the National Association of Health and Wellness.
School D	200 K grant for modular classroom, where instructors teach students on site at ML school about concepts; hire out teachers from school district to teach as "Distinguished Teachers in Residence" to avoid NTTs and switching NTTs; 2 year contact with university.	Accelerated master's program; also give Spec. ed. and ESL degrees; k-8 or 12 program, not ML certificate; 9 wks. in, 9 wks. out (in clinical, both semesters); curr. arranged thematically into 5 themes; every 2 weeks is a theme; Shadow is 1 day with NMSA web sources and "This We Believe" as context.
Textbook(s) used	Brown and Knowles; some use TP and Powell; "Taking Center Stage"; Used Stevenson but not anymore	Brown and Knowles; This we believe; NMSA research; No TP